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REMARKS

These remarks are in response to the non-final Office Action mailed 02/27/06, in which claims 1-7 are pending. Claims 1-7 stand rejected.

In the present application claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 2 and 6 and to incorporate a further limitation that recites "wherein the housing further comprises a guard disposed between the first and second razor blade assemblies." Support for these amendments can be found in at least paragraph [0024] and Fig. 4 of the specification and the scope of cancelled claims 2 and 6. Claim 1 has also been amended to correct an inadvertent and unintentional typographical error. In the preamble, "device" replaces "devise." Claims 2, 3 and 6 have been cancelled. Claim 7 has been amended to correct its dependency from now-cancelled claim 6 to claim 1. No new matter was added in making these amendments.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent number 6,161,288 to Andrews (hereinafter referred to as the "'288 patent") in view of US Patent number 5,579,580 to Althaus et al (hereinafter referred to as the "'580 patent").

The Examiner alleges that the '288 patent discloses a housing defining a cavity, first and second razor blade assemblies disposed within said cavity each blade assembly comprising; a blade carrier; at least two razor blades mounted on the carrier, each of said blades defining a longitudinal cutting edge; and wherein said cutting edges of the razor blades of the first and second blade assemblies are configured to allow the razor cartridge to cut hair when drawn over a user's skin in either of two different directions.

Claim 1 has been amended as previously described. The Applicants contend that the '288 patent fails to teach or suggest "said razor blades carried by said first razor blade assembly generally face toward said cutting edges of said razor blades carried by said second razor blade assembly" as is recited in claim 1 of the present invention. The Applicants contend that the '288 patent in fact teaches away from the present invention. In each of the 25 embodiments of the '288 patent the razor blades face away from each other and the patentee of the '288 patent makes the following statement in the paragraph bridging columns 4 and 5:

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From my perspective, it would be desirable to provide improved bi-directional razor systems, structures and cartridges which allow the user to shave rapidly, effectively and efficiently. That can be accomplished, in accordance with my invention disclosed herein, by providing, on a single razor head, a plurality of blades facing away from one another.

The Examiner goes on to concede that the '288 patent does not disclose a wire extending generally transversely across the cutting edges of said at least two razor blades but alleges the '580 patent teaches the use of a wire for wrapping blade assemblies. The '580 patent discloses a razor head having at least two razor blades at an angle to each other and with their cutting edges pointing away from each other. A number of spaced apart wires extend across all the cutting edges. The '580 patent fails to disclose "first and second razor blade assemblies, each blade assembly comprising; at least two razor (and) a wire extending generally transversely across the cutting edges of said at least two razor blades" and "wherein the first and second blade assemblies are independently moveable relative to the housing" as recited in claim 1 of the present invention. The Applicant's contend that the '580 patent teaches away from the present invention. Assume, *arguendo*, the razor blades on one side of the device of the '580 patent, for instance razor blades 10 and 11 in Fig. 2 were to move independently to razor blades 8 and 9 therein. A wire extending across all the cutting edges would either restrain independent movement of blades 10 and 11 away from blades 8 and 9 or would be severed by the cutting edges or otherwise break. If blades 10 and 11 moved towards blades 8 and 9 a wire extending across all cutting edges would become slack as the '580 patent makes no disclosure of any tensioning arrangement for this eventuality. In either situation (blades 10 and 11 moving independently either towards or away from blades 8 and 9) the device of the '580 patent would fail to perform as disclosed.

The Applicants therefore contend that both the '288 patent and the '580 patent alone or in combination fail to teach or suggest claim 1 of the present invention and it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over these references. Dependent claims, by definition, further define the subject matter of the independent claims from which they depend. Because claims 4, 5 and 7 depend from claim 1, claims 4, 5 and 7 add recitations that further define the subject matter of independent claim 1. As claim 1 is believed to be allowable, claims 4, 5 and 7 are therefore also believed to be allowable. The rejection of claims 3 and 6 is moot in light of the

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cancellation of these claims. The Applicants therefore respectfully requested the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 4, 5 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by the '288 patent and '580 patent.

The Examiner rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '288 patent in view of the '580 patent as applied to claim 1, above, and further in view of US Patent number 3,505,734 to Iten (hereinafter referred to as the "'734 patent").

Claim 2 has been cancelled, however the subject matter of claim 2 has been incorporated into claim 1 so this rejection will be addressed relative to and in light of the amendment to claim 1. For at least the reasons stated above the Applicants contend that the '288 patent and the '580 patent alone or in combination fail to teach or suggest claim 1 of the present invention. The '734 patent discloses (in Fig. 15 and at Col 7; lines 22-25) "the blades being arranged with the cutting edges opposed. A clearance space is provided for soap and debris. In this construction and relation of the elements one guarded blade acts as an auxiliary guard for the opposite one." This is not what is claimed in claim 1 of the present invention which recites in part "wherein the housing further comprises a guard disposed between the first and second razor blade assemblies." The Applicants therefore contend that the '734 patent alone or in combination with the '288 and '580 patents fails to teach or suggest claim 1 of the present invention and it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over these references. The Applicants therefore respectfully requested the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by the '288, '580 and '734 patents.

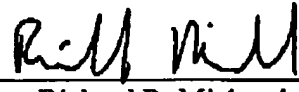
SUMMARY:

In summary, the Applicants believe that the foregoing remarks are fully responsive to the Office Action and that the amended claims herein are allowable. The Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection and objection be withdrawn and the present application be passed onto allowance.

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The Applicants believe that no additional fees are due with the filing of the present response, however, if any additional fees are due, please charge Deposit Account No 503342 maintained by the Attorneys of the Applicants.

Respectfully submitted,

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